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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN: ACTION FOR EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

Report of the Third Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Ahmed Yousif MOHAMED (Sudan)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 41st plenary meeting, on 26 October 1995, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fiftieth session the item entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace" and to allocate it to the Third Committee.

2. The Committee considered the item jointly with item 107, entitled "Advancement of women", at its 24th, 26th to 31st, 54th and 56th meetings, on 10 and from 14 to 17 November and on 13 December 1995. An account of the Committee's discussion of the item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.3/50/SR.24, 26-31, 54 and 56).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women (A/CONF.177/20 and Add.1);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women (A/50/744).

4. At the 24th meeting, on 10 November, remarks were made by the Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference on Women. The Acting Director of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and the Deputy to the Assistant-Secretary-General, Office for Human Resources Management, made introductory statements (see A/C.3/50/SR.24).

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5. At the same meeting, the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund and the Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women addressed the Committee (see A/C.3/50/SR.24).

6. At the 26th meeting, on 14 November, the Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference on Women made an introductory statement. The Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development also made a statement (see A/C.3/50/SR.26).

II. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS

A. Draft resolution A/C.3/50/L.63

7. At the 54th meeting, on 11 December, the representative of Finland, on behalf of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" (A/C.3/50/L.63).

8. At the same meeting, the Secretary of the Committee, on behalf of the sponsors, revised the draft resolution as follows:

(a) In operative paragraph 1, after the words "with approval of", the words "the resolution regarding" were inserted;

(b) In operative paragraph 2, the words "to ratify the amendment" were replaced with the phrase "so that acceptance by a two-thirds majority of States parties can be reached as soon as possible in order for the amendment to enter into force".

9. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/50/L.63, as orally revised, without a vote (see para. 14, draft resolution I).

B. Draft resolution A/C.3/50/L.64

10. At its 56th meeting, on 13 December, the Committee had before it a draft resolution submitted by the Chairman entitled "Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action" (A/C.3/50/L.64).

11. The Committee also had before it a statement of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/50/L.64, submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly (A/C.3/50/L.68).

12. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/50/L.64 without a vote (see para. 14, draft resolution II).

C. Draft decision

13. At its 56th meeting, on 13 December, on the proposal of the Chairman, the Committee adopted a draft decision by which the General Assembly would take note of the documents considered under the item (see para. 15, draft decision).

III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE

14. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

DRAFT RESOLUTION I

Amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 49/164 of 23 December 1994 on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women 1/ and its decision 49/448 of 23 December 1994 on the consideration of the request for the revision of article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention,

Recalling also the decision of the States parties to the Convention of 22 May 1995 2/ to amend article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention,

Welcoming the call for broad ratification of this amendment in the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women, 3/ held in Beijing from 4 to 15 September 1995,

Reiterating the importance of the Convention as well as the contribution of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to the efforts of the United Nations to eliminate discrimination against women,

1. Takes note with approval of the resolution regarding the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted by the States parties to the Convention on 22 May 1995;

2. Urges States parties to take appropriate measures so that acceptance by a two-thirds majority of States parties can be reached as soon as possible in order for the amendment to enter into force.

1/ Resolution 34/180, annex.

2/ CEDAW/SP/1995/2, annex.

3/ A/CONF.177/20, chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

DRAFT RESOLUTION II

Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 45/129 of 14 December 1990, 46/98 of 16 December 1991 and 47/95 of 16 December 1992, as well as Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/12 of 24 May 1990 and Council decision 1992/272 of 30 July 1992, recommending that a world conference on women be held in 1995,

Reaffirming the importance of the outcome of the previous World Conferences on Women, held at Mexico City in 1975, 4/ at Copenhagen in 1980 5/ and at Nairobi in 1985, 6/

Building on the consensus reached and the progress made at previous United Nations conferences and summits, on children in New York in 1990, 7/ on environment and development at Rio de Janeiro in 1992, 8/ on human rights at Vienna in 1993, 9/ on population and development at Cairo in 1994 10/ and on social development at Copenhagen in 1995, 11/ towards achieving equality, development and peace,

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4/ See Report of the World Conference of the International Women's Year, Mexico City, 19 June-2 July 1975 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.1).

5/ See Report of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Copenhagen, 14-30 July 1980 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.80.IV.3 and corrigendum).

6/ See Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10).

7/ See First Call for Children (New York, United Nations Children's Fund, 1990).

8/ See Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda).

9/ See A/CONF.157/24.

10/ See Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18).

11/ See A/CONF.166/9.

Expressing its satisfaction that the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace reached a successful conclusion and adopted the Beijing Declaration 12/ and Platform for Action, 13/

Expressing its profound gratitude to the Government of the People's Republic of China for having made it possible for the Conference to be held in Beijing and for the excellent facilities, staff and services so graciously placed at the disposal of the Conference,

Recognizing the significance of the outcome of the Conference to make a real change for the empowerment of women and thus to the fulfilment of the goals adopted in the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, 14/

Deeply convinced that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted at the Conference, are important contributions to the advancement of women worldwide and must be translated into effective action by all States, the United Nations system and other organizations concerned, as well as non-governmental organizations,

Recognizing that the implementation of the Platform for Action rests primarily at the national level, that Governments, non-governmental organizations and public and private institutions should be involved in the implementation process and that national mechanisms also have an important role to play,

Bearing in mind that promotion of international cooperation is essential for the effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,

Recognizing that the implementation of the Platform for Action requires commitment from Governments and the international community,

Recognizing also the important role played by States, the United Nations, the regional commissions and other international organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations and women's organizations, in the preparatory process of the Conference and the importance of their involvement in the implementation of the Platform for Action,

Taking into account the fact that the follow-up to the Conference should be undertaken on the basis of an integrated approach to the advancement of women within the framework of a coordinated follow-up to and implementation of the

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12/ A/CONF.177/20 and Add.1, chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

13/ Ibid., annex II.

14/ Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

results of the major international conferences in the economic, social and related fields, as well as the overall responsibilities of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolution [A/50/L.46] of _____,

Expressing its appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Secretary-General of the Conference and the staff of the Secretariat for the effective preparations and services provided for the Conference,

1. Takes note of the report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, 15/ as adopted on 15 September 1995;

2. Endorses the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as adopted by the Conference;

3. Calls upon States, the United Nations system and all other actors to implement the Platform for Action, in particular by promoting an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective at all levels, including in the design, monitoring and evaluation of all policies, as appropriate, in order to ensure effective implementation of the Platform;

4. Stresses that Governments have the primary responsibility for implementing the Platform for Action, that commitment at the highest level is essential for its implementation and that Governments should take a leading role in coordinating, monitoring and assessing progress in the advancement of women;

5. Calls upon States, with the assistance of non-governmental organizations, to disseminate widely the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

6. Emphasizes that Governments should, as soon as possible, and no later than 1996, develop comprehensive implementation strategies or plans of action, including time-bound targets and benchmarks for monitoring, in order to implement the Platform for Action fully;

7. Calls upon Governments to create a national machinery where it does not exist and to strengthen, as appropriate, existing national machineries for the advancement of women;

8. Encourages non-governmental organizations to contribute to the design and implementation of these strategies or national plans of action in addition to their own programmes that complement government efforts;

9. Recognizes the importance attached to the regional monitoring of the global and regional platforms for action, by regional commissions and other subregional or regional structures, within their mandates, in consultation with Governments, and the necessity of promoting cooperation among national Governments of the same region in this respect;

15/ A/CONF.177/20 and Add.1.

10. Invites the Economic and Social Council, in order to facilitate the regional implementation, monitoring and evaluation process, to consider reviewing the institutional capacity of the United Nations regional commissions within their mandates, including their women's units or focal points, to deal with gender-related issues in the light of the Platform for Action, as well as the regional platforms and plans of action, and to give consideration, inter alia, and where appropriate, to strengthening the capacity in this respect;

11. Calls upon States to take action to fulfil the commitments made at the Conference for the advancement of women and for the strengthening of international cooperation, and reaffirms that adequate financial resources should be committed at the international level for the implementation of the Platform for Action in the developing countries, in particular in Africa, and the least developed countries;

12. Recognizes that implementation of the Platform for Action in the countries with economies in transition requires continued international cooperation and assistance, as indicated in the Platform for Action;

13. Stresses that full and effective implementation will require a political commitment to make available human and financial resources for the empowerment of women, the integration of a gender perspective in budgetary decisions on policies and programmes, as well as adequate financing of specific programmes for securing equality between women and men;

14. Reaffirms that, in order to implement the Platform for Action, a reformulation of policies and reallocation of resources may be needed, but that some policy changes may not necessarily have financial implications;

15. Reaffirms also that, in order to implement the Platform for Action, adequate mobilization of resources at the national and international levels, as well as new and additional resources to the developing countries, in particular in Africa, and the least developed countries, from all available funding mechanisms, including multilateral, bilateral and private sources for the advancement of women, will also be required;

16. Calls upon those States committed to the 20:20 initiative to integrate a gender perspective fully into its implementation, as referred to in paragraph 358 of the Platform for Action;

17. Recognizes that the creation of an enabling environment is necessary to ensure the full participation of women in economic activities;

18. Reaffirms that the implementation of the Platform for Action will require immediate and concerted action by all to create a peaceful, just and humane world based on all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the principle of equality for all people of all ages and from all walks of life, and to this end, recognizes that broad-based and sustained economic growth in the context of sustainable development is necessary to sustain social development and social justice;

19. Considers, in relation to the United Nations, that the Platform for Action should be implemented through the work of all the bodies and organizations of the system during the period 1995-2000, specifically and as an integral part of wider programming;

20. Considers also that an enhanced framework for international cooperation for gender-related issues must be developed during the period 1995-2000 in order to ensure the integrated and comprehensive implementation, follow-up and assessment of the Platform for Action, taking into account the results of global United Nations summits and conferences;

21. Decides that the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women, in accordance with their respective mandates and with Assembly resolution 48/162 of 20 December 1993 and other relevant resolutions, shall constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental mechanism that will play the primary role in the overall policy-making and follow-up, and in coordinating the implementation and monitoring of the Platform for Action, reaffirming the need for a coordinated follow-up to and implementation of the results of major international conferences in the economic, social and related fields;

22. Also decides to appraise the progress on a regular basis and to include in the agenda of its forthcoming sessions, starting from 1996, an item entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women", with a view to assessing, in the year 2000, the progress achieved in the implementation of the Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women and the Platform for Action in an appropriate forum;

23. Invites the Economic and Social Council to consider devoting to this matter one high-level segment, one coordination segment and one operational segment, before the year 2000, taking into account the multi-year programme of work of the Commission on the Status of Women and all other functional commissions;

24. Also invites the Economic and Social Council to review and strengthen the mandate of the Commission on the Status of Women, taking into account the Platform for Action as well as the need for synergy with all other related commissions and conference follow-up, and for a system-wide approach to its implementation;

25. Decides that the Commission on the Status of Women, as a functional commission assisting the Economic and Social Council, shall have a central role in the monitoring, within the United Nations system, of the implementation of the Platform for Action and in advising the Council thereon;

26. Also decides that the Economic and Social Council should oversee system-wide coordination in the implementation of the Platform for Action and ensure overall coordination of the follow-up to and implementation of the results of all United Nations international conferences in the economic, social and related fields and report thereon to the General Assembly;

27. Requests the Commission on the Status of Women to develop its multi-year programme of work for the period 1996-2000 at its fortieth session so that it can review the critical areas of concern in the Platform for Action and to consider how it could integrate into its programme of work the follow-up to the Conference and how it could develop its catalytic role in mainstreaming a gender perspective in United Nations activities, taking into account the need for a focused and thematic approach to the review of the Platform for Action and the contribution that can be made by all other functional commissions of the Council;

28. Also requests the Commission on the Status of Women to forward its recommendations on the multi-year programme of work to the Economic and Social Council so that the Council can take a decision on the programme of work at its meeting in 1996, reviewing, coordinating and harmonizing the different programmes of work, including the reporting systems of all the commissions in the area of the advancement of women;

29. Invites, within their mandates, all other functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council to take due account of the Platform for Action and to ensure the integration of gender aspects in their respective work;

30. Requests the Secretary-General to assume responsibility for the coordination of policy within the United Nations for the implementation of the Platform for Action and the mainstreaming of a system-wide gender perspective in all activities of the United Nations system, including training, in accordance with paragraph 326 of the Platform for Action;

31. Also requests the Secretary-General to disseminate the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as widely as possible, including to the competent organs of the United Nations and the specialized agencies;

32. Further requests the Secretary-General to report, through the Commission on the Status of Women and the Economic and Social Council, to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session on ways to enhance the capacity of the Organization and of the United Nations system to support the ongoing follow-up to the Conference in the most integrated and effective way, including human and financial requirements;

33. Requests the Secretary-General to ensure the more effective functioning of the Division for the Advancement of Women in order to carry out all the tasks foreseen for it in the Platform for Action by, inter alia, providing sufficient human and financial resources within the regular budget of the United Nations;

34. Also requests the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, to ask the resident coordinators fully to apply a gender perspective in integrating the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women into the coordinated follow-up to recent global United Nations conferences;

35. Further requests the Secretary-General to report annually to the Commission on the Status of Women and to the General Assembly, through the

Economic and Social Council, on the measures taken and the progress achieved in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

36. Requests the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, within its mandate, to take into account the Platform for Action when considering reports submitted by States parties, and invites States parties to include information on measures taken to implement the Platform for Action in their reports;

37. Takes note of the importance of the activities undertaken by the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women in the implementation of the Platform for Action;

38. Encourages international financial institutions to review and revise policies, procedures and staffing to ensure that investments and programmes benefit women and thus contribute to sustainable development;

39. Invites the World Trade Organization to consider how it might contribute to the implementation of the Platform for Action, including activities in cooperation with the United Nations system.

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15. The Third Committee also recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decision:

Documents considered by the General Assembly in connection with the item "Implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace"

The General Assembly takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace. 16/

16/ A/50/744.